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Office of Superintendent
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MAR 20 2009

IND. DEPT. OF EDUCATION

March 17, 2009

Dr. Tony Bennett, Superintendent
Indiana Department of Education
151 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dr. Bennett,

In preparation for the Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Indiana, March 15th through 21st, 2009, the Indiana State Police has conducted an evaluation of the severe weather alert system. In years past, the State Police has supported the weather encoder program. The weather encoder receiver's are programmed to an analog radio frequency. The National Weather Service notifies the Indiana State Police of severe weather. The Indiana State Police activates the encoders and provides the severe weather information to the schools that have the receivers.

During the evaluation the National Weather Service has confirmed that they have been working with FEMA, over the last four years, to distribute NOAA radios to schools across the nation. This includes all public K-12, state universities and may even include parochial schools. The NOAA radios allow the National Weather Service to notify the schools of severe weather directly.

Due to the fact the schools have the NOAA weather radios and receive the information directly from the National Weather Service and the encoders are based on old technology, the Indiana State Police will no longer support the use of the weather encoder program. The Indiana State Police will continue to contact the local police agencies to support coordination of the local weather alert program.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Dana Douglas Biggs, Major, at 317.899.8531 or dbiggs@isp.in.gov

Respectfully,

Paul Whitesell, Ph.D.
Superintendent